

to the contract labour in Coal India Limited and its subsidiaries;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Coal India Limited and its subsidiaries are violating the Contract Labour Abolition Act on specific work;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action the Government propose to take against the officials involved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) and (b). Coal India Limited and its subsidiaries do not engage any labour on contract for execution on work of permanent and perennial nature. However, jobs which do not fall under the prohibited categories under Section 10 of the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970 are awarded to contractors who engage their own workers.

(c) Coal India Ltd. and its subsidiaries closely monitor the implementation of the provisions of the Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970 to prevent any contravention thereof.

(d) and (e). Do not arise in view of the above.

#### Pending Excise Dispute

\*233. SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of excise disputes pending for adjudication for the last more than 5 years;

(b) how much amount is locked in these disputes and the reasons for pendency of these cases; and

(c) the steps the Government propose to take for the expeditious disposal of outstanding excise disputes?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c). The number of Excise disputes pending for adjudication for the last more than 5 years is 6813.

The amount locked up in these disputes is approximately Rs. 814.38 crores. Many of the issues involved in the cases are pending before CEGAT, High Courts or the Supreme Court.

Various measures are being taken to expedite finalisation of the cases at the stage of adjudication and appeal before the Tribunal and courts. These include sanctioning of more posts of Commissioners to deal, inter-alia, with adjudication, reviewing of powers of Adjudication of Central Excise Officers at various levels, appointment of common adjudicators to exclusively deal with some of the cases which are complex and appointment of senior counsel to represent the Department.

[Translation]

#### Spices Processing and Packaging Units

\*234. SHRIMATI BHAVNA BEN DEVRAJ BHAICHIKHALIA :

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have chalked out any scheme for encouraging spices processing packaging and oleoresins-in units through the Spices Board in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c), whether any assistance is being given to such small scale industrial units;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any multinational company is marketing these products in the country;

(f) if so, the details thereof;

(g) whether the Government have received any proposal from multinational companies for setting up joint venture industries in this sector;

(h) if so, the details thereof; and

(i) the likely impact of such joint venture industries on export and production of spices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Some of the schemes being implemented for promoting export of value added spices and spice oleoresins include :-

(1) Providing grant-in-aid for technology transfer and process upgradation to spice exporters for establishing spice processing units and adopting new technology.

(2) Providing interest free loans to exporters of spices of approved brands in consumer packs.

(3) Assistance for undertaking R & D work for product development, research programmes through research institutions/agencies.

(4) Providing grant-in-aid for setting up laboratory and accreditation under ISO 9000.

(5) Providing grant-in-aid to meet packaging cost for export

(6) Awarding 'Spice House Certificate' and 'Indian Spice Logo' to exporters of consumer packed spices as recognition of mark of quality.

(c) and (d). Small scale units can also avail of all the benefits of the various schemes of the Spices Board.

(e) and (f). Multinational companies are engaged in spice processing in the country. Multinational companies